

Intermediating the Book Beautiful: Shakespeare at the Doves Press

Typographers rarely feature as headline news, but early in 2015 the determined detective-typographer Rob Green appeared on BBC television to describe how he acquired a “mudlarker’s license,” hired professional scuba divers, and resurrected from the oozy bed of the Thames the Doves type.¹ Dubbed “the most beautiful type in the world” by type historians,² this famous proto-Modern adaptation of the Renaissance Jenson typeface had been considered lost forever when its co-creator, the printer and binder T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, destroyed it in a series of dramatic midnight ventures between 1913 and 1916 in order to prevent his business partner Emery Walker, or anyone else, from ever using these perfect letters for what the former considered imperfect texts. By carefully reading Cobden-Sanderson’s personal letters, Green had managed to find the spot near Hammersmith Bridge where the bookbinder buried his type.³

The public attention paid to the recovery of the Doves type testifies to our burgeoning interest in the material, tactile, and printed components of traditional codices in an era of electronic textuality. Recent studies in the history of what constitutes a book, such as Jeffrey Todd Knight’s and Garrett Stewart’s books *Bound to Read* (2013) and *Bookwork* (2011), the co-authored article “Hamlet’s Tables,” and other considerations of books as objects, investigated the phenomenology of reading: how what we have historically considered as paratexts to printed words (the paper, layout, typeface, signatures, binding or binder’s marks, and so on) are in fact part of the “text proper” and convey meaning, significance, and beauty upon what we understand as literature.⁴ Such

explorations range from cognitive investigations of what happens when we see and read text to aesthetic, sensuous, and material considerations of books and their properties, with some forays into the political or polemical.

Few such studies, however, integrate these approaches, although a holistic theory of the book has, I will argue, a long history, and one that often takes Shakespeare and Shakespearean books for its test-cases. In what follows I combine the arguments of present-day neuroscience about “hard-wired” letter-recognition in the brain and theories of “intermediality” or movement between or among aesthetic methods of sensory communication with the mystical early twentieth-century theories of bookness, reading, and vision propounded by T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, co-founder and co-director of the Doves Press, in order to propose a theory of modern Shakespeare reading as a distinct kind of experience. Specifically, I will argue for the early twentieth-century fine press *edition* as a critical, as well as an aesthetic, intervention that intermediates public play-going and private reading.

Moreover, I will suggest, specific qualities of bookness, and particular quiddities of type, enable this intermediality. During the process of preparing *Hamlet* for publication the publisher and founder of the Doves Press, T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, an exponent of the “Book Beautiful” and “The Ideal Book” as the product of Art and Craft, came up with a unique visual solution to its textual irregularities. The history of Shakespeare at the Doves Press and of Cobden-Sanderson as an editor, and his type, layout, and editorial interventions in the Doves *Hamlet* demonstrate the exigencies of what Harry Berger, Jr. has called the “imaginary audition” of a printed play-text that we read and of the modern Shakespeare edition.⁵

Print as Intermedium

Richard Lanham distinguishes in *The Economics of Attention* (2006) between an interface (type or screen) that viewers read “through” and one that we read “at” (alerted to screen icons, hardware, typeface, aspects of presentation to which we usually do not attribute meaning). Lanham’s term for readers or viewers who switch between reading *at* and reading *through* is “oscillation.” When we read “through,” we read for information, for conclusion or closure, as if (in Lanham’s terms) to win a “game.” When we oscillate between through and “at,” we read with a specific purpose in mind and treat our reading as something or (in Lanham’s word) “stuff” that we will at some point apply to something else. When we read “at,” we read open-endedly, playfully, as if our reading is part of a drama and our life in itself an ongoing story. It’s in the mixture of at/through that bookness, I suggest, emerges as an interpretive and intermedial category.⁶

Intermediality is “what happens when various sign-*systems* interact,” summarizes Christina Ljungberg.⁷ Irina Rajewsky expounds intermediality as a “generic term for all those phenomena that...have to do with a crossing of borders between media, and which thereby can be differentiated from intramedial phenomena as well as from transmedial phenomena (i.e., the appearance of a certain motif, aesthetic, or discourse across a variety of different media).”⁸ Thus, for example, one might consider Hamlet’s dying sound, the “O, o, o, o” that follows “The rest is silence” in the Folio (although not in the second quarto, nor in most modern editions) as an intramedial rather than intermedial attribute, and the apparition of the ghost on stage, in print, and on screens as a transmedial characteristic.⁹ Note, however, that Hamlet’s groans can and do signify *intermedially* when performed, as “words devolve first into cries and then into silence.”¹⁰ Printed plays are

always potentially intermedial. More helpful in this context, therefore, is Jens Schröter's careful analysis: "Synthetic" intermediality, he suggests, forms a whole unified by political or social movements such as Fluxus and renders us unable to distinguish among mediatized forms; formal or transmedia intermediality features "*fictionality, rhythmicity, compositional strategies...seriality*" as constants analyzable from one medium to another); transformational intermediality uses one medium to *represent* another without attempting naively to recreate it. Ultimately, however, he concludes that aesthetic and "life media" compose a fundamental, "ontological intermediality," so that all media forms are created and divided only after-the-fact.¹¹ We can only distinguish scroll from codex after the latter's invention, just as we only think of cinema as "2-D" once "3-D" becomes ubiquitous. We create such "monomedia exclusions" deliberately: moreover, adds Schröter, "Any specificity can be constructed that fits any purpose allowing the evaluation of certain objects."¹² Shakespeare in particular can be imagined as a communicative intermedium in its own right. Recent work, for example, identifies as intermedia such diverse events and artefacts as not only stage performances, YouTube Shakespeares and mobile telephone applications but also 1930s radio, demediated or altered books, and votive candle holders.¹³

These insights from rhetorical and media theory correspond to what we know about how readers learn to identify, process, and decode letters, words, and texts. What scholars of reading education such as Maryanne Wolf call "expert reading" — the skilled, unnatural, and learned task so necessary to functioning in the modern world — occurs in what neuroscientist Stanislas Dehaene titles "the brain's letterbox," a specialized area on the left parieto-temporal part of the brain.¹⁴ Reading, Dehaene summarizes, is a composite and multi-sensorial process and the reading brain an assemblage of: highly-

specialized neurons; a tiny area on the fovea of the retina that can focus sharply enough to recognize and respond to letter-forms; the light-source that illuminates those letters on page or screen; and the hand-eye coordination of scrolling, clicking, or swiping a computer screen or of leafing or dog-earing or flicking the pages of a printed codex. An expert reader engaging with familiar words can nonetheless directly engage the circuits that process meaning and sound in order to read *through* typography, orthography, color, and other visual variations in order to comprehend text; we can thus recognize a letter in any computer font or print typeface, on any color of paper or ink, under any sufficient light source, on any part of the page, and at any size within the visual field. Expert readers have learned to read *through* both letter-forms and the material interfaces of bookness. Poets, literary readers, book and visual artists must re-learn to see *at* — to pay attention consciously to all the visual attributes we have learned to ignore in identifying a letter-shape — just as we have to re-learn, in reading Shakespeare for its acoustic or dramatic effects, consciously to foreground the phonological aspects of reading that we usually process within milliseconds at a pre-conscious level.

Just as Hamlet's *O*s make us sound out words once more, as a beginning reader does, so artist's books make us read *at* or process books and texts as unfamiliar objects: to process them visually and with awareness or effort, to bring them back from the brain's letterbox. Artists' books — which I understand to include fine print limited editions, unique artworks by book artists, book sculptures, altered books, *livres d'artiste*, miniature books, elephant folios and other forms that, in Johanna Drucker's words, "interrogate" the form of the book as a medium — encourage or rather demand an oscillation between reading *at* and reading *through*.¹⁵ As e-readers and screens of various kinds proliferate, specific affordances or user-adapted design qualities of printed and bound books emerge.

We now perhaps read AT all printed books, or at least, their bookness — the fact that they are media, and the particularities of that medium — manifest more clearly to us in comparison with our newer modes of reading. And postmodern typographers such as Matthew Butterick or Ellen Lupton refuse Beatrice Warde’s notion of transparency, that type should be as a “crystal goblet” through which the sense of the words shines brilliantly, and concentrate instead upon what the typeface itself communicates and whether that typeface is appropriate for its context.¹⁶

The qualities of bookness alert us within our own moment of media revolution. Ours is not the first such revolution, nor even the second; typographer Thomas Phinney calls Gutenberg’s moveable type revolution the first, the birth of machine-printing and automated punch-cutting in the Industrial Revolution the second, the mid-twentieth-century move to photocomposition the third, and our own late twentieth-century and ongoing digital revolution the fourth.¹⁷ The private press movement coincides with the birth of machine-printing and hot-metal printing (linotype and monotype), which broadened the dissemination of knowledge and of books and newspapers (one could argue that this is the time at which books could be said to comprise a mass medium) but that also presented a labor crisis (and again, the parallels with our own era and the status of skilled knowledge-work or craftsmanship spring to mind). One such response to such a crisis of skilled labor at the end of the nineteenth century arose in the work of economist John Ruskin, the writing of art critic Walter Pater on the Renaissance, and in the rise of the Arts and Crafts movement fueled by the textile designer, poet, novelist, socialist, and printer William Morris — views that would strongly influence the attitudes, theories, and practices of the early twentieth-century printer T.J. Cobden-Sanderson and his planned edition of the complete works of Shakespeare.

Struck by the arguments of John Ruskin that in the pre-industrial world, before the division of labor, a craftsperson could participate in the making of a thing of beauty and own the means of production, Morris founded the Kelmscott Press, and what became the Arts and Crafts movement in England, in 1891. Morris curated every aspect of the book, from paper to type to binding to layout and illustration and illumination. His paper was hand-made from linen, rather than cotton rag (and certainly not from the much cheaper wood-pulp that had begun to replace flax and cotton fiber in the latter half of the nineteenth century). He attempted to resurrect the beautiful fifteenth-century types founded by Nicholas Jenson (fig. 1) and Jacob Rubeus (Jacob de Rossi, fig. 2), arguing that “commercial exigencies” such as newspaper printing and the growth of the new industry and craft of advertising had led to type that was unnaturally narrowed (in order to fit a newspaper column) or with exaggeratedly thin and thick strokes (he particularly detested the “sweltering hideousness” of Bodoni, fig. 3).

Morris sought instead “letter pure in form; severe, without needless excrescences; solid, without the thickening and thinning of the line...and not compressed laterally,” as in his famous “Golden type.”¹⁸ Morris additionally specified the size of ideal margins and of spacing between words and lines, using medieval manuscripts as a model. Thus Kelmscott books bore elaborate and wide left and right margins, as in the British Library’s Kelmscott Chaucer, and did not, for the most part, use “leading,” strips of lead between lines of type, to create white space; the inner margin (sometimes called the “gutter”) of a spread must be the narrowest margin of all, because, he wrote, “the unit of a book is not one page, but a pair of pages” (Fig. 4).¹⁹

Fine artisanal private presses inspired by Kelmscott during the golden era of the private-press and fine printing movements in England and in the United States included

Ashendene, Cockerell, and, most interesting to Shakespeareans because of its incomplete project to publish the complete works of Shakespeare, the Doves Press, founded by Cobden-Sanderson and Emery Walker. A great admirer of his father-in-law, the free-trade politician and co-founder of the Anti-Corn-Law League, Richard Cobden, Sanderson (1840-1922), a struggling young barrister and a friend of William Morris, changed his name to include that of his wife, Annie Cobden, becoming Cobden-Sanderson. Inspired by the philosophy that he was the one to name the “Arts and Crafts Movement,” and encouraged by the Morrises, Cobden-Sanderson left the practice of law, which he despised, and took up bookbinding in 1884. He became one of the best bookbinders in England, working out of the Doves Bindery (so named after the nearby Doves Tavern in Hammersmith).

Despite his sought-after skill as a bookbinder, Cobden-Sanderson dreamed of founding a press that would adhere simultaneously to the principles of Morris’s “Ideal Book” and to the ideals of socialism. He wanted to oversee the complete process of book production, down to the making of the paste and the ink; Morris “had often spoken of making his own ink, but this intention was never carried out.”²⁰ Moreover, he wished prominently to acknowledge the work of the crafters who did the hand-work necessary for design of all kinds. Oscar Wilde, writing in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, summarizes Cobden-Sanderson’s lecture on the art of bookbinding and its connection, in the binder’s mind, to ethical and integrated labor practices and to the dissemination of the world’s greatest literature: “Mr. Sanderson...spoke of the necessity for the artist doing the whole work with his own hands...The bookbinder of the future is to be an educated man who appreciates literature and has freedom for his fancy and leisure for his thought.”²¹ Wilde, although a socialist himself, remained unconvinced that bookbinding was a truly

“expressive” art that would reflect the soul of the worker, deeming it instead an “impressive” or “decorative” craft that, unlike true art, seeks to “glorify” rather than to “annihilate its material” in its flourishing. Notably, Morris describes himself as “a decorator by profession” and although the “decoration” or the illustration or illumination is subordinate to the printed words, he implies that the pictures or ornament provide “harmonious decoration” to the melody presumably provided by the “printed book.”²²

Cobden-Sanderson believed, in contrast, and in anticipation of Beatrice Warde’s modernist aesthetic, that decoration detracted from the text. In his *Journal* for September 10th, 1903, he writes, “I am not greatly interested in the decoration of books, though I decorate them; it is in the ideal of which the binding and decoration of books are illustrations that I am interested.”²³ Indeed, he continues apocalyptically, craft for its own sake will annihilate literature altogether: “if crafts be pursued without this resting upon ideas, there will come a reaction, and they will be swept away with a great destruction.”²⁴ Doves books are therefore plain to a fault (fig. 5), their only ornament the calligraphy of Edward Johnston on title-pages, the use of rubrication, and the beautiful type itself.

Book historian William Peterson writes, “The unhappy truth is that the Doves books are boring in their cold perfection, each one an immaculate clone of the other.”²⁵ Peterson does Doves a disservice here; as we shall see, the Shakespeare books in particular use type (notably layout and rubrication) to make an argument about reading, and about reading particular plays, through their visual form. In this way, Doves Press expressed more of a modernist sensibility than Kelmscott, and offered what type historian Will Ransom calls a “chaste simplicity” that “presaged the trend in type design that was to become evident during the succeeding half century.”²⁶

Cobden-Sanderson delayed establishing a private press for many years, mostly for practical reasons. Moreover, the binder-barrister, very dedicated, set himself the goal of learning calligraphy and other book arts from their first principles so that he could work alongside his crafters and surveil every aspect of book production. After the dissolution of the Kelmscott Press at Morris's death in 1896, however, the matter began to seem urgent. In 1900, funded by Annie Cobden-Sanderson's inheritance from Richard Cobden and with William Morris's former partner and type designer at Kelmscott, Emery Walker, as an equal partner in the enterprise, Cobden-Sanderson began to design a new type and found a new press.

Walker, a printer, type designer, and photo-gravurer, was involved with new print technologies and media, particularly intaglio processes, interests that would later cause immense trouble with Cobden-Sanderson. Cobden-Sanderson would accuse Walker of failing to become involved in the day-to-day workings of the press and of merely providing capital, and Walker would accuse Cobden-Sanderson of refusing to treat him as a full partner in the enterprise by insisting on the former's absolute power to choose which texts the press should publish. Where Walker, gifted, outward-looking, and forward-thinking, anticipated multiple uses for type, in different kinds of literature, and in emerging new media such as newspapers, packaging, and other potential print venues, Cobden-Sanderson remained idealistic, obsessive, and single-minded to a fault. This mismatch of personalities and styles would prove disastrous for the future of the press and its Shakespeare texts.

The Book Beautiful: “go on, and begin with Shakespeare”

In his manuscript notes on bookness and response to William Morris's "The Ideal Book," "The Book Beautiful" (printed in revised form as "The Ideal Book and the Book Beautiful" in 1900 for the Doves Press and in still another form in his book *Ecce Mundus* for the Hammersmith Publishing Society) Cobden-Sanderson distinguishes among three types of book — the wholly symbolic (in which signs that bear no resemblance to what they represent — such as the letters of the alphabet that make up words that connote objects); the picture-book, in which pictures represent things that they resemble; and the composite, or mixed book, in which "the material with the subject matter impressed upon it, in symbol or in picture, may be bound up to constitute materially the unity which ideally it already is."²⁷ In this sense Cobden-Sanderson's ideal of, say, bookbinding breaks down Oscar Wilde's distinction between expressive and decorative arts; in the ideal and beautiful book, the material itself — the boards, the ink, the paste, the gilt, the paper — expresses the individuality of author, type-designer, press-man, calligrapher, binder and so on in an unified whole:

the Book...is a composite thing, and it may be made beautiful as a whole, by each of its principal parts being made beautiful...but by each in subordination to the whole which all together they constitute: or it may be made beautiful by virtue of the supreme beauty of one or more of its parts, all the other parts subordinating or even effacing themselves for the sake of this one or more, but each being in its turn capable of playing that supreme part itself and each in its own peculiar and beautiful way.²⁸

Worker, materials, text, type, elements such as lead, all work together to create an artwork that is a laborious assemblage that exists during its human encounters with makers and readers, that is, while it is being made and while it is being read. At the same

time, however, Cobden-Sanderson at this stage in his career places these communicating and communicative arts in a distinct hierarchy.

The author's imagined intention or "thought or image" is paramount, and typography, binding, and layout must serve the higher goal of authorship:

The whole duty of Typography, as of Calligraphy, is to communicate to the imagination, without loss by the way, the thought or image intended to be communicated by the author: and the whole duty of Beautiful Typography is not to substitute for the beauty or interest of the thing thought and intended to be conveyed by the symbol, a beauty or interest of its own, but, on the one hand, to win access for that communication by the beauty of the medium, and on the other hand to take advantage of every pause or change in that communication to interpose some characteristic and restful Beauty in its own art.²⁹

Cobden-Sanderson anticipates a central paradox of modernism, famously identified by Clement Greenberg: the work of art at once draws attention to its own materiality even as it attempts to use that material interface to access a fundamental truth about human experience. The ideal type would, then, in some sense attempt to bypass its own materiality and permit a direct communion between the mind of the author and the mind of the reader. Perhaps it could do so by figuring letter-shapes that would approach more closely to the invariant letter-forms located in a Platonic heaven or a cerebral "letterbox." Note that Cobden-Sanderson idolizes the Author, whom he understands to be a transcendent, almost god-like being to whom printer, typographer, and binder owe allegiance.

Since "[t]he idea to be communicated by the book comes first," Cobden-Sanderson strove for the clearest or crispest type he could find. Doves type was based on

a fifteenth-century typeface by Nicholas Jenson and another by Jacobus Rubeus — “a beautiful, open type,” Cobden-Sanderson called it, although “over-inked,” which meant that they had to “extract” the type, that is to say, to uncover a finer or more shapely version of the typeface. Doves therefore genuinely comprised a design, not a copy. (Ironically enough, since the punches and matrices had been lost, the present-day digital version of Doves engineered by Robert Green had to be similarly “extracted” from the printed copies and is likewise a design rather than a copy.) Where Morris had thickened the lines of Jenson’s type to make it more medieval-looking, however, Cobden-Sanderson made it slenderer, arguing that early printers often over-inked their type (by contemporary standards) and so one had to return to the original design. (Randall McLeod has found evidence of over-inking in printed poems by Donne; the ink is visible under magnification to have been squeezed out towards the edge of the letters, away from the bevel, a tendency that printers call “squash.”³⁰)

Just as the performance of Shakespeare’s plays required collaboration among writer, actors, stage-manager, and audience, so the creation of the Doves type required the co-operation and skill of artists, designers, and craftworkers: Percy Tiffin, the draughtsman; Edward Prince, the punch-cutter; Edward Johnston, the calligrapher; and Walker, who co-designed the type with Cobden-Sanderson. Cobden-Sanderson had very particular demands for the ideal typeface and oversaw the entire process, as he had wished. Johnston’s sample dropped letters exist in the Triple Crown Collection at Washington University of St. Louis in multiple states, for example (figs. 6-9). Each man’s particular skills, and the simultaneous or successive use of both ancient and innovative media technologies (draughtsmanship and photographic reduction) contributed towards this most perfect type, even down to the special punch-cutting process that produced

punches and matrices strong enough to withstand the hand-press but still slender enough to print beautifully and evenly on the page (thus eluding the problem of over-inking that had, Walker and Cobden-Sanderson believed, bedeviled Rubeus and Jenson and misled Morris in his turn).³¹

Such intermedial precision extended to the matter within the books as well as to the books themselves. Great works, in particular, writes Cobden-Sanderson, need to be reimagined as wrought, crafted, beautiful books in subsequent eras. He started the Doves Press with the Doves Bible, and then planned to issue all the works of Shakespeare. The final purpose of printing was for him mystical: “the compositor...must ‘compose,’ and in the language of the publisher, ‘publish’” nothing less than “Reality, and Man’s life as part of it,” through “the workmanship of life, and its embodiment in forms beautiful as are those in which Literature itself has found its expression & embodiment.”³²

As Cobden-Sanderson developed his mystical literary philosophy, however, the partnership between him and Walker became increasingly fraught. The original agreement between the partners had said that in the event of dissolution Walker would be entitled to a fount of the type that he could use as he pleased. Cobden-Sanderson became increasingly regretful about this clause, obsessed with the possibility of the type’s being used in a machine-, rather than a hand-press, or for commercial purposes rather than for high literature. When Cobden-Sanderson tried to end the partnership in 1906, convinced that Walker had given up his rights to the type, Walker was legitimately concerned about the financial situation of the press, about his own potential liability, and the total loss of rights to the beautiful type upon which he had worked so hard. Both men were over-committed, kindly, and absent-minded; it has proven impossible to reach the truth. In 1909 the conflict reached a crisis: Walker demanded half the stock of type and that

Cobden-Sanderson stop printing, and Cobden-Sanderson barred Walker from entering the press. Cobden-Sanderson was adamant that he would continue printing, although his wife's own money was running out.

It was in this dramatic context that Cobden-Sanderson decided to print Shakespeare's works. A now-lost journal entry, documented by Andrew Pollard, recounts a conversation between Annie Cobden-Sanderson and the bookseller Bain in London, after which Annie decided, wrote Cobden-Sanderson, that the press

should go on, and print the English Classics, and begin with Shakespeare, and Shakespeare with *Hamlet*. I immediately assented. The Press should go on, and print the English Classics, and begin with Shakespeare, and Shakespeare with *Hamlet*. And light shone once more on the path.³³

The court's compromise permitted Cobden-Sanderson unlimited access to the type during his lifetime, and unrestricted access to it for Walker after his former partner's death.

Unknown to all, from that moment on Cobden-Sanderson planned to destroy the type so that it could not be used for unworthy books or unworthy purposes, in compliance with the wishes expressed in his journal and that he wished all to regard as his last will and testament:

*It is my wish that the Doves Press type shall never be subjected to the use of a machine other than the human hand, in composition, or to a press pulled otherwise than by the hand and arm of man or woman; and this I will see to in my Will, though, if I forget, I desire that this which I have written shall operate in its place.*³⁴

Secretly, over a period of several years (1913-1917), on long, cold, midnight journeys to the river Thames, Cobden-Sanderson drowned his type over the Hammersmith Bridge, where it remained until 2014.

Cobden-Sanderson's typically overblown rhetorical figure for his renewed enthusiasm for publishing the "English Classics," "light [shining] upon the path," ascribes to Shakespeare and to *Hamlet* in particular the mystical, metaphysical qualities he similarly attributed to typography. Recall that he believed that the "duty of Typography" was supposed to be transparently to communicate the "thought or image...of the author." He encountered some problems with the notoriously complex text of *Hamlet*.

The Doves *Hamlet*

As Shakespeareans and even many lay-persons know, the 1603 so-called "Bad Quarto" (Q1) contains fewer than half as many lines as the 1604 "Good Quarto (Q2), which is longer than the 1623 Folio (F); but each text contains lines and cruxes that are unique to itself and that do not appear in the others. Cobden-Sanderson hopes in the "Advertisement" for the Doves *Hamlet* to create an edition "compris[ing] the whole of the quarto, & the whole of such portions of the folio as are not already given in the quarto, no more, no less," adding that this conflated text already "constitute[d]...the standard texts of to-day, notably the Cambridge edition."³⁵

Turn-of-the-century editors, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary* editor and Shakespearean F.J. Furnivall, whom Cobden-Sanderson consulted, held that Q2 was closer to Shakespeare's original idea or intention, that some passages had been inadvertently omitted from it and appeared only in the Folio, and that such a conflated edition was what an editor ought to produce. The late twentieth-century Riverside

Shakespeare *Hamlet* or the second Arden edition of *Hamlet* by Harold Jenkins similarly conflated Q2 and F in order to get closer to what the editors believed Shakespeare intended. The 1986 Oxford Shakespeare, in contrast, used the Folio as its copy-text and aimed not to channel Shakespeare's intentions but to produce versions of the plays as they were first performed on stage.³⁶ Cobden-Sanderson, however, announces his determination to adhere to "the integrity of the Quarto" and produce "not a compound" of F and Q2 but "an edition of the Quarto only." At same time, he castigates the Cambridge editors':

- (1) modern spelling, (2) modern & elaborated punctuation, (3) metric rearrangement of lines, (4) new stage-directions and descriptions, with omission and variation of the old (5) a division into acts & scenes not given in the originals, & (6) here & there, conjectural textual emendations which, whether or not they satisfy the original intention, do with the modern spelling, punctuation, and the rest substitute for the original text & workmanship, the workmanship and text of a later time, and affect the whole character & atmosphere of the Play.³⁷

Again, Cobden-Sanderson anticipates the modernist arguments: his claims for "original" spelling and punctuation evoke a now-notorious essay by Laura Riding and Robert Graves about the value of original or old-spelling.³⁸ Cobden-Sanderson aligns his editorial principles with his aesthetic ideals about the Book Beautiful to argue startlingly that, in some sense, the author's intention does not matter.

But where Riding and Graves would praise original punctuation and spelling for their pluripotentiality, their ability to generate new arguments, ideas, and interpretations to the point of absurdity, regardless of historical context, Cobden-Sanderson argues that

the “workmanship” and the material interfaces of the work of art form a necessary historical vector to take us back in time and truly to understand “the Play.” The Book Beautiful comes into being through a mystical communion between “text” and “workmanship.” To that end, he adds,

Into the present edition of the two texts nothing will be introduced which is not already to be found in one or other of them: the old spelling & punctuation will be retained, & to preserve as much as atmosphere of the time as may be contained even in the presentment itself of the play, the division into acts & scenes will not be adopted.³⁹

In this sense his text idiosyncratically fuses the intention-centered ethos of his contemporaries and the performance-centered principles of Wells and Taylor, idiosyncratically because, as we shall see, his ideal of “the Play” is dramatic, but not theatrical, played out across the pages of the book and in the mind’s eye.

The Postscript to Cobden-Sanderson’s advertisement, added in an Appendix to the play, wryly acknowledges, after the fact:

it was proposed to print an edition of Hamlet which should comprise the whole of the second quarto and the whole of such portions of the first folio copy of the play as are not already given in the quarto, “no more, no less.” It has not been found possible to adhere in its integrity to this proposal.⁴⁰

The text as finally printed excluded some of the F text “due to metric & other considerations,” including “regrettable, but almost inevitable oversight,” and omitted “four monosyllables” and “two or three words” of Q2’s dialogue and stage-directions respectively.⁴¹ Cobden-Sanderson remedied this “deficiency” by including a detailed

Appendix that listed the parts of the Folio added or omitted, the parts of Q2 omitted, the F substitutions for Q2, and alterations to Q2's punctuation based on F's.

Thus Cobden-Sanderson was unable to produce a text of the “integrity” or wholeness that he wished. He *was* able however to establish a different kind of “integrity” for this book: he used typography and layout in order to make an original argument about both the meaning and the structure of the play. At this time, Cobden-Sanderson was experimenting with rubrication, sometimes, thought a contemporary, to the detriment of the printed page or to the reader's comprehension. Most words that are not uttered by a character appear in red: speech-prefixes, stage-directions, and act and scene numbers, which the Doves *Hamlet* does include, *contra* Cobden-Sanderson's advertisement, but only at the top of each page, left verso and right recto.

Andrew Pollard writes:

For myself the more I study printing the more convinced I am that while touches of red are a delightful ornament, parsimony in their use is much more remunerative than profusion, and that the effect of any considerable mass of red on a page is almost always unsatisfying.⁴²

The rubrication and layout in the Doves Shakespeare books makes them an exception to what Ransom calls Doves' “chaste simplicity” and Peterson calls their “cold perfection.” The Doves *Venus and Adonis* prints the colophon entirely in red. The Doves *Sonnets* prints the dedicatory epistle to the sonnets and Sonnet 126 entirely in red, as if they provide literally a pair of rubrics or set of directions on how to read the poems.

The Doves Shakespeare plays print all speech-prefixes in red, and usually, as is traditional, within the left-hand margin. Exceptionally, however, in *Hamlet*:

The names of the persons taking part in the direct action of the play have been placed at the side of the page. But those of the players, when declaiming the death of Priam, or enacting the murder of Gonzago, of Ophelia when deranged, & of the Clown when singing, are placed in the centre to mark their detachment, permanent or momentary, from the direct interaction of the persons whose names are placed at the side. The latter are, like the reader, spectators only of the players so engaged, of Ophelia distracted, and of the clown singing, who, in their several ways do, for the moment, enact a play within the play.⁴³

This quite extraordinary critical interjection — extraordinary as coming from a publisher and editor aspiring towards the “original...text and workmanship” of historically informed early modern printing — treats Ophelia’s madness and her songs as a set-piece, much as the player’s speech or the dumb-show and the play-within-the-play.

Cobden-Sanderson suggests through his intrusive -- and more difficult to read -- red-ink type and through his unexpected layout that we consider these episodes differently from the main action of the play because these characters and incidents are “detach[ed]” from the main characters at these points; they feature on-stage audiences, which he compares to “reader[s]” engaged with the book as “spectators only” of the “direct action.” Cobden-Sanderson thus centers and rubricates the entire action of the dumb-show. Technically, of course, the description of the dumb-show comprises simply another stage-direction, and therefore rubricating its description of the action in its entirety is perfectly consistent with the editorial method deployed throughout. Yet the dumb-show’s setting in red surely corresponds to what Pollard would call “excessive rubrication,” a notable lapse from the restrained good taste of the books elsewhere. Moreover, centering the speech-prefixes of the Player-King and the Player-Queen rather

than placing them on the left-hand side with the other speech-prefixes draws attention, as Cobden-Sanderson outlines, to the explicitly-mentioned, interrupting on-stage audience. In this way the printer-editor presents the dumb-show as if it indeed functioned as the "rubric" or guide to determine Claudius's guilt that Hamlet wishes it were (fig. 11).

Note that in the first encounter with the players, Hamlet's own declamation of "The rugged Pirrhus" from memory appears typographically as part of the play's regular and "direct action"; Hamlet begins a new line of verse, but he retains the same rubricated speech-prefix on the left-hand side, as traditional, whereas the prefix of the player who completes the speech, with tears in his eyes for Hecuba, moves to the center of the page (fig. 12). Cobden-Sanderson's Hamlet, therefore, engages on the page in what the printer has called "direct action" rather than metatheatre. Hamlet's remembered speech (as others have remarked) exudes "coagulate gore," the red and black of blood-and-thunder:

the dread and black complection smeard

With heraldy [sic] more dismall head to foote

Now is he total Gules.⁴⁴

Together, the Pyrrhus speeches of Hamlet and the Player "mirror" (in Arthur Johnston's metaphor) Hamlet's own motive for revenge through the figure of *descriptio* (ekphrasis) or "speaking picture."⁴⁵ The mirror is almost endlessly self-reflexive, as the Pyrrhus episode incites the action "to catch the conscience of the King" through a play that is "something like" the death of old Hamlet in the orchard, and through the actions of a protagonist (Hamlet himself) who resembles a character from the mythology of an old play (Pyrrhus) who in *his* turn (as Michael Hattaway observes) figures a "painted tyrant" as he reflects a "typically Shakespearean" mode of "representing the process of rehearsal or re-presentation."⁴⁶ Johnston and Hattaway contrast Hamlet's own delay with the

precipitancy of rugged Pyrrhus; Michael Taylor even suggests that Hamlet *opposes* himself to both the unvarying sense of "wronged innocence" expressed by Hecuba or to the "elementary evil" of avenging Pyrrhus.⁴⁷ Cobden-Sanderson's setting, however, indicates that he, at least, considered Hamlet's Pyrrhus speech as "direct action," rather than "removed from it." If we are to consider this speech as intervention rather than set-piece, as action rather than as exposition, as poesis rather than ekphrasis, then Hamlet himself becomes utterly sincere in his incarnation as blood-thirsty avenger and his Pyrrhus speech naturally forms not an isolated memory or but a touchstone, the first half of "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I," consistent with Cobden-Sanderson's ascription of an overwhelming and systematic trajectory for the revenge-plot within the play.

Cobden-Sanderson also deploys layout and rubrication to respond to changes in the verse. The layout of IV.v, Ophelia's scene of madness, contrasts vividly with the scene immediately preceding it, Fortinbras' march across the stage, and to Hamlet's response, "How all occasions doe informe against me." The rubrication pauses the eye in both scenes and emphasizes the action taking place on stage and in the mind's eye; the red letters march with Fortinbras' "Army ouer the stage" (fig. 14).⁴⁸

Cobden-Sanderson's treatise and advertisement for the Doves Press had argued that "poetry appeals to the eye as well as to the ear" and sought "words that evoke a series of sensory impressions" to correspond exactly to the idea or emotion being expressed. T. S. Eliot would later use the phrase "objective correlative" in his writing on *Hamlet*, and the quest for a material or verbal form that corresponds to feelings or ideas exactly forms part of the New Critical or more broadly Modernist project. Eliot, however, complained that *Hamlet* failed because it *lacked* an objective correlative (which for Eliot must be a form of words that utter the inexpressible responses of the body).⁴⁹ Cobden-Sanderson's *Hamlet*

mitigates what he, like Eliot, regarded as a failure of the text to provide an objective correlative by superadding the sensory impression to the words as we read them. Cobden-Sanderson has thereby produced a Book of Hamlet that's about Hamlet and *Hamlet*. The former's interpretation of this text will be made into a book; and the book itself IS the interpretation of the text. The book beautiful and the ideal reader together produce the platonic performance.

Through his throwaway phrase, "like the reader, spectators only of the players," Cobden-Sanderson parallels reading a book and watching a performance. The book is the theatre, and the type, the white space, the paper, the page-turns, the bindings that make the book "handy," all activate the words and the actions of the play. The Doves *Hamlet* breaks down or destroys a simple opposition or binary between reading and performance, because reading a Book Beautiful activates, as Cobden-Sanderson suggests, all the senses in order to create a particular performance.

The book functions as a memory palace, or rather a memory theatre, its landmarks the invariant letter-forms so familiar to us that we read without pausing unless a printer puts roadblocks (such as excessive rubrication or an eccentric layout) in our way. Contemporary neuroscience, as we have seen, is only now beginning to catch up with what Jenson, Rubeus, and, later, Morris and Cobden-Sanderson and future typographers realized through practice and workmanship: reading illuminates morphological, kinesthetic, phonological and visual circuits within the brain. The twenty-first-century book and performance artists Davy and Kristin Maguire make this point elegantly and expressively through their interactive book installation *Theatre Book: Macbeth*, a development from their earlier *Icebook*, "the world's first projection mapped pop-up

book.”⁵⁰ The book’s pop-up cut-paper pages form a miniature animated theatre, with film projections on it, and a musical score, telling a story through time (figs. 15-18).⁵¹

A fusion of book arts, performance, and animation, *Theatre Book: Macbeth* breaks down the supposed binary that opposes reading and viewing theatrically: books provide portals into enchanted worlds of performance that can be frozen and then re-animated by the combination of page-turning, vision, sound, story, character, and a human hand. The Maguires mount this argument theatrically, where Cobden-Sanderson makes his textually, but both use book arts and artisanship to create a coherent narrative persona that reads/writes the book.

Textual scholarship has finally caught up with Cobden-Sanderson, too. With the publication of Wells and Taylor’s Oxford Shakespeare (thirty years ago now), Shakespeare scholars argued that plays were meant to be performed and that these early printed documents were most useful and most Shakespearean as records of performed texts, and that the folio in particular had a special status, being (it was thought) set from prompt-books or fair copies. Now we reverse ourselves, partly encouraged by Lukas Erne’s argument that from the early 1600s, Shakespeare consciously imagines his play-texts (quartos included) as crafted documents for private perusal or literary reading, two activities or processes that are by no means equivalent but that may overlap in many ways.⁵²

In particular, Erne suggests a possible explanation for the length of Q2: he suggests that Q2 is a dedicated reading edition, a theory that the play’s most recent editors, Neil Taylor and Ann Thompson present approvingly in their Arden3 edition.⁵³ The eccentric and increasingly paranoid Cobden-Sanderson, then, turned out to be a prescient editor and textual scholar as well as a fine printer. If Erne, Thompson, Neil

Taylor and other recent editors are correct, then what the Doves Press produced is the quintessence or perfection of Q2, “with the integrity of the proper text of the quarto,” as Cobden-Sanderson intended – a reading edition, a “Book Beautiful” comprising pages, binding, type, ink, and reader and that would through this assemblage produce nothing less than “the workmanship of life itself.”

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¹ Tom Beal, BBC News, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_bGsT_5SFA>, February 24, 2015. Accessed May 4, 2015.

² Bruce Rogers, *The Dial* (July 16, 1909), 38 col. 2, repr. Google Books, accessed June 19, 2014.

³ See Simon Garfield, *Just My Type* (New York: Gotham, 2012), and Marianne Tidcome’s definitive, scholarly account of the press and the type in *The Doves Press* (London: British Library, 2002).

⁴ Jeffrey Todd Knight, *Bound to Read* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Garrett Stewart *Bookwork: Medium to Concept to Art* (University of Chicago Press, 2011); Peter Stallybrass, Roger Chartier, John Franklin Mowery, Heather Wolfe, “Hamlet’s Tables and the Technologies of Writing in Renaissance England,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55.4 (2004): 379-419.

⁵ Harry Berger, Jr., *Imaginary Audition: Shakespeare on Stage and Page* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). In this essay I will refer to Cobden-Sanderson’s *The Tragical Historie of Hamlet* (Hammersmith: Doves Press, 1909); *Venus and Adonis* (Hammersmith: Doves Press, 1912), and *Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Hammersmith: Doves Press, 1909).

⁶ Richard Lanham, *The Economics of Attention: Style and Substance in the Age of Information* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

⁷ Christina Ljungberg, “Intermedial Strategies in Multimedia Art,” in *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality*, ed. Lars Elleström (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 84.

⁸ Irina O. Rajewsky, “Intermediality, Intertextuality, and Remediation: A Literary Perspective on Intermediality,” *Intermedialités* 6 (2005), 45-6

<http://cri.histart.umontreal.ca/cri/fr/intermedialites/p6/pdfs/p6_rajewsky_text.pdf>, accessed December 21, 2015.

⁹ Martin Coyle usefully summarizes the textual elision of Hamlet's "O"s in modern editions in his "'O, o, o, o': Hamlet Again," *ACUME*, n.d.

<http://www2.lingue.unibo.it/acume/acumedvd/zone/research/essays/coyle.htm>, accessed December 22, 2015.

¹⁰ Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 13.

¹¹ Jens Schröter, "Four models of intermediality," in *Travels in intermedia[lity] : reblurring the boundaries*, ed. Bernd Herzogenrath (Hanover, N.H. : Dartmouth College Press, 2012), 15-36, 22.

¹² Schröter, "Four Models," 30.

¹³ See *Outerspeares: Shakespeare, Intermedia, and the Limits of Adaptation*, edited by Daniel Fischlin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014) and *Intermedial Shakespeares on European Stages*, edited by Aneta Mancewicz (Houndsmill, UK: Palgrave Mcmillan, 2014).

¹⁴ Maryanne Wolf, *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain* (New York: Harper, 2008), esp. 3-21; Stanislas Dehaene, *Reading in the Brain* (London: Penguin, 2009). See also Oliver Sacks, *The Mind's Eye* (New York: Random House, 2010); N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), esp. 55-79; and, in a different register, Annie Paul Murphy, "Your Brain on Fiction," *The New York Times*, 18 March 2012

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/the-neuroscience-of-your-brain-on-fiction.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0>, accessed June 17, 2014.

¹⁵ Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (New York: Granary Press, 1995).

¹⁶ Matthew Butterick, *Practical Typography*, <www.practicaltypography.com>, accessed June 24, 2014; Ellen Lupton, *Thinking with Type*, 2004 (repr. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010); Beatrice Warde, *The Crystal Goblet: Sixteen Essays on Typography* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1956).

¹⁷ Thomas Phinney, "Type Technology: The Four Revolutions," 1992, ed. Norman Walsh, web archive: <http://www.tug.org/docs/html/fontfaq/cf_28.htm>, accessed June 19, 2014.

¹⁸ William Morris, *The Art and Craft of Printing* (London: Kelmscott, 1902), repr. California Digital Library, 2001, accessed June 19, 2014, 2.

¹⁹ Morris, *Art and Craft*, 4.

²⁰ Morris, "Note on his Aims in Founding the Kelmscott Press," *Art and Craft*, 13.

²¹ Oscar Wilde, "The Beauties of Bookbinding," Review of "Bookbinding," lecture by T.J. Cobden-Sanderson at the Arts and Crafts Society, in *Works*, Volume 14, 103-104, repr. Google Books, accessed June 17, 2014.

²² Morris, "Note on His Aims," 4.

²³ Cobden-Sanderson, quoted in Will Ransom, *Kelmscott, Doves, and Ashendene: The Private Press Credos* (New York: The Typophiles, 1952), 104.

²⁴ Cobden-Sanderson, *Journals II*, 46, quoted in Ransom, 104.

²⁵ William S. Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 281.

²⁶ Ransom, 16.

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- ²⁷ T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, "The Book Beautiful: Calligraphy, Typography, Illustration," manuscript, 1982, repr. in Tidcombe, 11.
- ²⁸ "Book Beautiful," repr. in Tidcombe, 6.
- ²⁹ T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, *The Ideal Book or Book Beautiful* (San Francisco: Roxburghe Club, 1930), 5.
- ³⁰ R. MacGeddon [Randall McLeod], "Hammered," in *Negotiating the Jacobean Printed Book*, ed. Pete Langman (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 136–199. On the phenomenon of "squash," see Robert Leach, *The Printing Ink Manual*, 4th ed. (Padstow, Cornwall: Springer, 1988), 61.
- ³¹ Details of the multiple process appear in Tidcombe and in Andrew W. Pollard, "The Doves Press," repr. Ransom, *Kelmscott*, 79–80.
- ³² "Book Beautiful," repr. Tidcombe, esp. 11
- ³³ Pollard, *Kelmscott*, 91.
- ³⁴ Journals II, 137, quoted in Ransom, 105.
- ³⁵ Cobden-Sanderson, "Appendix: Reprint of Advertisement," *Hamlet*, ed. T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, 2.
- ³⁶ G. Blakemore Evans et al., eds., *The Riverside Shakespeare* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); Harold Jenkins, ed. *Hamlet*, Arden Shakespeare, Second Series (London: Methuen, 1982; Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, eds., *Complete Works of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). For a sharp overview of the tortured textual histories of *Hamlet*, see Zachary Lesser's *"Hamlet" After Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).
- ³⁷ Cobden-Sanderson, "Advertisement," 2.
- ³⁸ Laura Riding and Robert Graves, "William Shakespeare and E.E. Cummings: A Study in Original Punctuation and Spelling," *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* (London: Heinemann, 1927), 59–82.
- ³⁹ "Advertisement," 2.
- ⁴⁰ "Advertisement," 3.
- ⁴¹ "Advertisement," 3–4.
- ⁴² Pollard, 85–86.
- ⁴³ Cobden-Sanderson, "Dramatis Personae," 23
- ⁴⁴ Cobden-Sanderson, ed. *Hamlet*, II.ii., p. 62 (Hammersmith: Doves Press, 1912).
- ⁴⁵ Arthur Johnston, "The Player's Speech in Hamlet," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 13 (1962): 21–30, p. 25.
- ⁴⁶ Michael Hattaway, "Ekphrasis in Tudor Drama: The Representation of Representations," *Theta* 7 (2007): 41–52, <http://umr6576.cesr.univ-tours.fr/publications/Theta7/fichiers/pdf/hattaway.pdf>, accessed March 21, 2016, p. 48.
- ⁴⁷ Michael Taylor, "A Note on the 'Pyrrhus Episode' in *Hamlet*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 21 (1970): 99–103, p. 102–3.
- ⁴⁸ Cobden-Sanderson, *Hamlet*, IV.iv.s.d., p. 110.
- ⁴⁹ Thomas Stearns Eliot, "Hamlet and His Problems," 1921, *The Sacred Wood*, 124–5.
- ⁵⁰ Davy and Kristin Maguire, *The Icebook*, www.theicebook.com, accessed April 2, 2016.
- ⁵¹ Davy and Kristin Maguire, *Theatre Book: Macbeth*, <https://vimeo.com/123121148>, accessed April 2, 2016.

⁵² Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Thanks to Juliet Dusinberre for suggesting I revisit this book in light of this project.

⁵³ Neil Taylor and Ann Thompson, eds., *Hamlet*. Arden Shakespeare, third series (London: Bloomsbury, 2010).